

Having described the preferred embodiments, the invention is now claimed to be:

1. An apparatus (16) for recording a selected program, comprising:
 - a) a means (36) for selecting the selected program;
 - b) a means (16) for receiving a data stream, a start data packet, and an end data packet associated with the selected program;
 - c) a means (32) for detecting the start data packet associated with the selected program and the end data packet associated with the selected program; and
 - d) a means (34) for recording the selected program, the recording being initiated in response to the detection of the start data packet associated with the selected program and terminated in response to the detection of the end data packet associated with the selected program.
2. The apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein the data stream includes one or more programs and a private stream, each program being represented by content data packets in the data stream, the private stream including the start data packet and the end data packet associated with the selected program and a start data packet and an end data packet associated with each additional program.
3. The apparatus as set forth in claim 2 wherein the associated start data packet precedes the associated content data packets in the data stream for each program and the associated end data packet follows the associated content data packets in the data stream for each program.
4. The apparatus as set forth in claim 3 wherein the end data packet of a preceding program and the start data packet associated with a following program are combined in a common data packet.
5. The apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein the data stream includes one or more programs, wherein each program is represented by content data packets in the data stream, the start data packet and the end data packet being in a private stream, which also

includes a start data packet and an end data packet associated with individual additional programs or program segments.

6. The apparatus as set forth in claim 5 wherein the associated start data packet in the private stream is provided in advance of the associated content data packets in the data stream for each program and the associated end data packet in the private stream is provided after the associated content data packets in the data stream for each program.

7. The apparatus as set forth in claim 6 wherein each end data packet of a preceding program and the start data packet associated with a succeeding program are combined in a common data packet.

8. The apparatus as set forth in claim 1 wherein the start data packet and the end data packet include information that identifies the selected program.

9. The apparatus as set forth in claim 1 wherein the data stream includes multiple programs, each program being associated with a sub-channel, the start data packet and the end data packet including information that identifies the selected program and the sub-channel associated with the selected program.

10. The apparatus as set forth in claim 1 wherein the data stream is associated with a first channel, the start data packet and the end data packet are associated with a private stream and a second channel, the start data packet and end data packet including information that identifies the selected program and the channel associated with the selected program.

11. The apparatus as set forth in claim 1 wherein the data stream is a digital data stream and includes one or more programs, each program in the data stream being represented by digital content data packets, and the means for recording the selected program including a digital recorder to record the digital content data packets.

12. A method for recording a selected programming with a video recorder comprising:

- a) receiving a data stream associated with the selected programming;
- b) receiving and detecting a start data packet associated with the selected programming;
- c) starting the recording with the video recorder in response to the detection of the start data packet;
- d) receiving and recording the selected programming;
- e) receiving and detecting an end data packet associated with the selected programming; and
- f) stopping the recording of the selected programming in response to the detecting of the end data packet.

13. The method as set forth in claim 12, before step a) further including:
combining one or more programs and a private stream to produce the data stream, each program being represented by content data packets in the data stream, the private stream including a start data packet and an end data packet associated with each program;
and

providing the data stream to a consumer environment having the video recorder.

14. The method as set forth in claim 13 wherein the associated start data packet precedes the associated content data packets in the data stream for each program and the associated end data packet follows the associated content data packets in the data stream for each program.

15. The method as set forth in claim 14 wherein each end data packet and the start data packet associated with a succeeding program are combined in a common data packet.

16. The method as set forth in claim 12 wherein the data stream is a digital data stream and includes one or more programs including the selected programming, each program in the data stream being represented by digital content data packets.

17. The method as set forth in claim 12, further including before step a):
combining one or more programs to produce the data stream, each program being represented by content data packets in the data stream;
combining a start data packet and an end data packet associated with each program to produce a private stream; and
providing the data stream and the private stream to a consumer environment having the video recorder.

18. The method as set forth in claim 17 wherein the associated start data packet in the private stream is provided in advance of the associated content data packets in the data stream for each program and the associated end data packet in the private stream is provided after the associated content data packets in the data stream for each program.

19. The method as set forth in claim 18 wherein each end data packet of a preceding program and the start data packet associated with a succeeding program are combined in a common data packet.

20. The method as set forth in claim 12 wherein the start data packet and the end data packet include information that identifies the selected program.

21. The method as set forth in claim 12 wherein the data stream includes:
multiple programs, each program being associated with a sub-channel;
the start data packet and the end data packet including information that identifies the selected program and the sub-channel associated with the selected program.

22. The method as set forth in claim 12 wherein the data stream is associated with a first channel, the start data packet and the end data packet are associated with a private stream and a second channel, and the start data packet and end data packet include information that identifies the selected program and the channel associated with the selected program.

23. A method for recording selected programming comprising:

- a) combining one or more programs to produce a data stream, the one or more programs including the selected programming, each program being represented by content data packets in the data stream;
- b) combining a start data packet and an end data packet associated with each program to produce a private stream; and
- c) providing the data stream and the private stream to a consumer environment having the video recorder.

24. The method as set forth in claim 23, further including:

- receiving the data stream associated with the selected programming;
- receiving and detecting the start data packet associated with the selected programming;
- starting the recording with the video recorder in response to the detection of the start data packet;
- receiving and recording the selected programming;
- receiving and detecting an end data packet associated with the selected programming; and
- stopping the recording of the selected programming in response to the detecting of the end data packet.

25. The method as set forth in claim 24 wherein the data stream is a digital data stream, each program in the data stream being represented by digital content data packets.